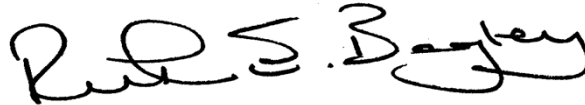


Date of issue: 18th January 2011

MEETING	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Councillors M S Mann (Chair), Bains, Bal, Basharat, Coad, Haines, Shine, O'Connor and Walsh)
DATE AND TIME:	THURSDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 2011 AT 6.30 PM
VENUE:	COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	TERESA CLARK (01753) 875018

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART 1

<u>AGENDA</u> <u>ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
	Apologies for absence.		
	CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS		
1.	Declarations of Interest		

AGENDA
ITEM

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

WARD

(Members are reminded of their duty to declare personal and personal prejudicial interests in matters coming before this meeting as set out in the Local Code of Conduct).

SCRUTINY ISSUES

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| 2. | Medium Term Financial Plan 2011-12 to 2014-15- | To Follow |
| 3. | Housing Revenue Account- Annual Rent Setting 2011-2012 | 1 - 6 |
| 4. | Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Setting 2011-12 | To Follow |
| 5. | Draft Asset Management Plan and Capital Strategy 2011 - 2016 | To Follow |
| 6. | Review of Scrutiny | 7 - 12 |
| 7. | Census - A Progress Report | 13 - 16 |
| 8. | Forward Work Programme | 17 - 18 |
| 9. | Date of Next Meeting- 3rd March 2011 | |

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Special facilities may be made available for disabled or non-English speaking persons. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview & Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 27th January, 2011
CONTACT OFFICER: Neil Aves: Assistant Director, Housing Services
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875527
WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) ANNUAL RENT SETTING 2011-2012**1 Purpose of Report**

This report is a copy of that which is intended to be presented to Cabinet on the 7th February 2011 and gives members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to comment prior to consideration by Cabinet.

This report advises Members of the proposed 2011-12 annual rent and service charge rise to tenants calculated in accordance with the Government's housing subsidy determination released to local authorities on 10th January 2011. The report also details the proposals for other rents and ancillary charges used for specific elements of the Council's housing stock.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

- 2.1 That Scrutiny & Overview committee provide their comments and observations prior to the following recommendations being placed before Cabinet
- 2.2 The Cabinet is requested to resolve
- (a) That the rent increase for 2011/12 be set according to the national rent restructuring formula, equivalent to an average increase of 6.82%. Para 5.1 to 5.18 refer
 - (b) That heating, utility and ancillary charges are increased by 4.6%, based on the September RPI figure used in rent setting. Para 5.11 refers
 - (c) That service charges are increased by 5.1%, being the RPI+0.5% uplift used for rent setting. Para 5.13 refers
 - (d) That garage rents are increased by RPI (4.6%). Para 5.10 refers
 - (e) That 'other committee' property rents are increased by 6.82% in line with the average increase of all housing properties. Para 5.9 refers

3 Community Strategy Priorities

- **A cleaner, greener place to live, work and play**

By generating income from rents and service charges, we are able to reinvest in our programmes of improvement for Social Housing to ensure it meets the needs of local residents.

- **Prosperity for All**

Rents have been raised in line with market rates to ensure that they are reasonable in the economic climate. Once tenants are notified of these charges, those eligible for full or partial Housing Benefits will have their claims automatically adjusted. Notification letters to tenants also include information on how to receive help and advice if they have difficulty in paying their rent.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

The rent setting process allows the Council to determine both the level of income that will be received from rent and the amount of subsidy that is payable to Government. Both will be fed into the HRA budget for 2011/12 that will be presented to this Cabinet in a separate paper and also the longer term HRA Business Plan. The HRA budget will be prepared in accordance with CIPFA guidance and accounting best practice. Budget proposals and the Business Plan will ensure that HRA balances are maintained at an appropriate level to deliver an effective housing service.

(b) Risk Management

This report introduces new levels of rent, fees and service charges across the Housing Revenue Account in accordance with legislation, best practice and government guidance. The report has noted a number of rent increases determined by the Government at a time of Council Tax freezes. All tenants will be communicated their new rent charges on an individual basis 4 weeks ahead of implementation and have the opportunity to receive help and advice on how to pay their rent. A large number of options are available for payment to allow tenants to personalise the service to meet their own financial needs. Estimates for income that will be received in year are made prudently and will reflect prediction of voids and write off levels.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal or human rights implications to this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

This report relates to all tenants occupying council homes. Rent fees and charges are set in accordance with government guidance and relate closely to each persons individual circumstances and usage. The proposal will not disproportionately affect any section of the community as defined under the above legislation.

(e) Workforce

There are no workforce implications to this report.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 Members will be aware that since 2002 the Government has been far more prescriptive in the manner in which local authorities can set the annual Council house rents and as such limited discretion exists for Council's to move from this.
- 5.2 The formula used works with the aim of converging all Council and Housing Association rents at a set point in the future, currently 2017. As a result, all similar properties will have directly comparable rents but with inbuilt variances to reflect local property values and average county earnings. These comparable rents are known as 'target rent'.
- 5.3 In applying this formula, each tenant will have a rent increase of RPI + ½% (Retail Price Index Rate of Inflation) where RPI is 4.6%. In addition rent will be increased by a proportion of the difference between this inflated rent and the target rent for the property. This incremental increase is based on the target date for rent convergence. The current convergence date set by government is 2016/17 (5 years time) and as such an amount equivalent to 1/5 of the difference between formula and target rent is charged to ensure convergence at this date.
- 5.4 It should be noted that convergence date in prior years was 2012/13 and therefore the increase in rent created by the increment was of a greater percentage then for this year (because rents would need to achieve their target level in 3 increments rather than 5).
- 5.5 In order to ensure that rents are not increased excessively, the rental formula includes rental constraint devices (known as caps and limits). The cap dictates the total amount that can be charged for each property based on the number of bedrooms. In addition, the limit states that no tenants' rent can be increased by more than RPI + 0.5% + £2 year on year. Where these apply, each local authority is compensated directly for the resulting loss in income by the Treasury.
- 5.6 While these caps and limits benefits each tenant immediately, the Council only receives reimbursement 12 months in arrears and the loss of around £200,000 of income will impact on the cash flow forecasting for the HRA budgets. The Council is fortunate to have £10.5m in HRA balances at the end of 2010/11 and therefore this loss will not impact upon front line services within the next 12 months.
- 5.7 Rent harmonisation has meant that after applying the variables to each property in the stock, having regard to their attributes, it is no longer possible to demonstrate the exact rental value for any particular property size or type. However for illustrative purposes, the average rent charged by bedroom number for the current year (based on those properties held at the year end) is:-

Property Size	Average Rent 2010-2011
Bedsit	£61.50
1 bed	£69.24
2 bed	£83.24
3 bed	£90.49
4 bed	£97.78
5 bed and larger	£116.33

- 5.8 When the rent formula is applied directly across all 6,500 council dwellings, this equates to an average of a 6.82% rise. This is in line with the national average of rent

increases and therefore Slough's rent can be deemed consistent with government guidelines. The table below provides further information on the proposed rents and associated rise for each classification of property within the stock:

Size	10/11 Rent	11/12 Rent	Average Rise
Bedsit	£61.50	£65.38	6.32%
1 Bed	£69.24	£73.90	6.73%
2 Bed	£83.24	£88.77	6.63%
3 Bed	£90.49	£96.82	6.99%
4 Bed	£97.78	£104.37	6.73%
5 Bed	£116.33	£124.22	6.79%

Other Committee property rents and DISH (Development Initiative in Slough Housing) Property Rents

- 5.9 The housing service has for some time managed rent accounting and collection on behalf of a number of other services (Highways, Parks, Social Services). Following normal adopted practice, rents on these properties will increase by the same borough-wide average of 6.82%. With regard to the 54 DISH properties, since 2008 these properties have been included within the rent convergence policy and therefore will mirror the above indicative rents.

Garage Rents 2010-2011

- 5.10 In accordance with the policy previously adopted, garage rents are set in line with the CLG calculation of RPI used to calculate house rents. As RPI was at 4.6% in September 2010, (the date used by the government as an indicator for rent increases) garage rents this year will increase to this effect. The VAT increase from 17.5% to 20% was applied from January 2011 and will be applied to all privately owned garages, garage bases and car ports.

Utility Charges

- 5.11 We continue to provide some housing stock with communal water, heating, fuel and laundry facilities which we recharge as part of a specific weekly service charge. In order to ensure we recovery sufficient income to cover current utility costs, all utility bills (with the exception of water), will be increased by RPI (4.6%). The only exception to this is water, where our costs are determined by Thames Water as our supplier and these will be updated as soon as they become known.
- 5.12 Where we charge insurance to tenants as part of our self insurance scheme, the amount charged will be as notified to us by our broker....

Service Charges

- 5.13 The Council has discretion in the amount to be charged for property service charges. As such, we recommend that all service charges will be increased by RPI + ½ % (5.1%). This is consistent with DCLG guidance issued in prior years. The average service charge on HRA properties will be £7.33 per week

5 Consultation and notification

In accordance with legislation tenants will be formally advised of their new rent levels in writing at least 28 days before they are implemented on the 4th April 2011

6 **Conclusion**

This report outlines the proposed Council home rents for 2011-2012 having applied the Government's Rent Restructuring formula. In conjunction with the HRA Budget adoption report, these recommendations will deliver a balanced HRA budget and ensure medium term sustainability for the HRA Business Plan.

7 **Background Papers**

None.

This page is intentionally left blank

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview & Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 27 January 2011

CONTACT OFFICERS: Sunita Sharma - Scrutiny Policy Officer
Catherine Meek - Deputy Borough Secretary

(For all enquiries) (01753) 875480 sunita.sharma@slough.gov.uk
(01753 875011 catherine.meek@slough.gov.uk)

1 Purpose of Report

To consider the current Scrutiny Structure and proposals for streamlining arrangements for Panels and effective scrutiny

2 Recommendation

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider the report and recommend the following changes to Scrutiny effective from the Annual meeting of the Council (19th May2011):

- a) To initially reduce the number of Standing Panels from four to three by combining the Community Leisure & Environment and Neighbourhood & Renewal panels.
- b) To subsequently consider the possibility of reducing the number of Standing Panels to two, subject to future clarity regarding the authority's statutory obligations as a result of changes relating to the provision and monitoring of health services.
- c) That Democratic Services continues to provide a full clerking service to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to the Health Scrutiny Standing Panel (both statutory obligations) and that the Scrutiny Officer services the remaining two Scrutiny Standing Panels.
- d) Subject to (c) above that the minutes and records of the two non-statutory Scrutiny Standing Panels be confined to factual listing, bullet point and recommendations/resolutions for each meeting with no summary of debate.
- e) That the authority's participation in the Joint East Berkshire Health & Overview Scrutiny be kept under review.
- f) That the Committee and proposed three Standing Panels adopt a more robust focus on (and review of) priorities, setting clear objectives for their work at the beginning of each municipal year to best define activities and aid effective focussed scrutiny within a reduced budget.

3 Community Strategy Priorities

The Council's decision making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of the Council's Community Strategy Priorities.

4 Other Implications

Financial

The Council has a substantially reduced financial settlement for 2011/12 from central government. The Council has proposals for saving £6.9m with effect from 1st April 2011 and the focus of these savings in line with Member requirements is away from customer facing front line services and requires reductions in corporate areas such as management costs and support services. Proposals within this report contribute to the savings requirement in Democratic and Member Services and Scrutiny support. The report suggests how Scrutiny might achieve modest savings whilst maintaining integrity

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications. The proposals comply with the legal requirements for Scrutiny.

5 Supporting Information

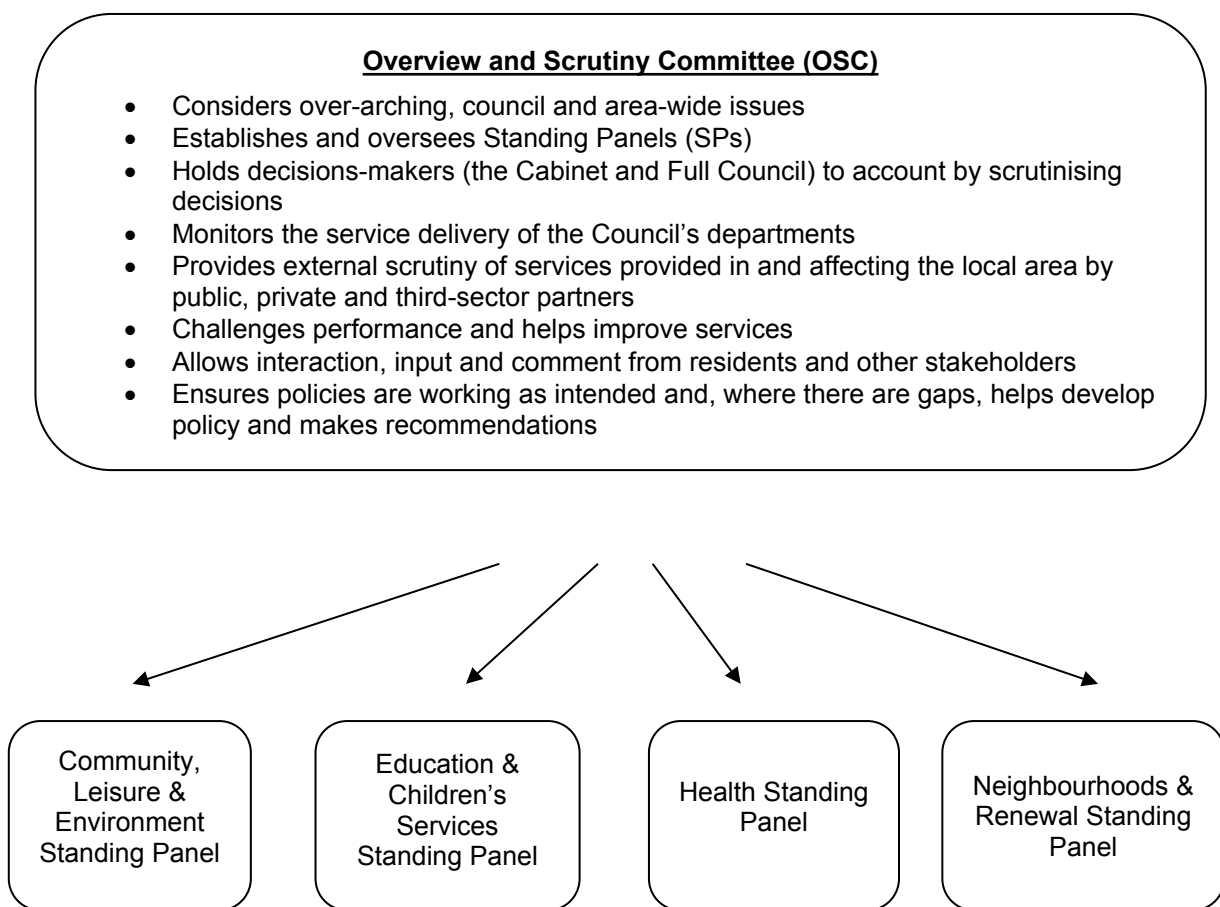
- 5.1 Overview & Scrutiny was introduced as part of the modernisation of local government and derives its powers from Section 21, Part II of the Local Government Act 2000. This **requires** local authorities operating under executive arrangements (i.e. leader and a cabinet) to create **at least one** Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) consisting of non-executive (i.e. non-cabinet) elected members. The OSC's function is to review and scrutinise the decisions and actions of the executive or the authority and to make reports or recommendations accordingly. OSC may also make reports and recommendations on matters affecting the local authority's area or its inhabitants.
- 5.2 The OSC at Slough Borough Council (SBC), through powers derived from the Council's Constitution, subsequently appoints a series of Standing Panels (SPs) enabling greater focus on specific subject matter. SBC currently has four SPs each working to a thematic agenda:
- Community, Leisure & Environment
 - Education & Children's Services
 - Health
 - Neighbourhoods & Renewal
- 5.3 The remit of the first, second and fourth broadly reflects the current frontline service directorates of the Council although, due to the agreed restructure, this will be changing effective 1 April 2011; the third, whilst also being closely linked to a frontline directorate, is established to carry out the statutory functions of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (Section 7) which **requires** review and scrutiny of local National Health Service (NHS) provision as well as wider health issues. It is unclear whether the requirement to scrutinise health will continue after 2013 (following the return of public health and health improvement to local authorities) but, in the meantime, the requirement remains.
- 5.4 As part of the legal framework for Local Area Agreements (LAAs), the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 provides enhanced powers to Scrutiny whereby certain public services have a "duty to co-operate" and respond, as required, including District councils, The Environment Agency, Natural England, Fire

and rescue authorities, Jobcentre Plus, The Health and Safety Executive, The Broads Authority, National Park Authorities, Youth Offending Teams, Police authorities, Transport for London, Chief Officer of Police, Local Probation Boards, Probation Trusts and other providers of probation services, Primary Care Trusts, National Health Service Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts, Joint Waste Authorities, Joint Waste Disposal Authorities, RDAs, The Learning and Skills Council, Sport England, English Heritage, Arts Council, Museums Libraries and Archives Council, Highways Agency, Metropolitan Passenger Transport Authorities and others bodies which may be added by the Secretary of State (by Order).

5.5 The government has announced the abolition or disbanding of the some of the above. It is not yet known whether the new local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) will also be subject to Scrutiny.

5.6 Powers further enable Scrutiny to examine current local improvement targets (LAA targets), require information from partner organisations signed up to LAA targets and require those organisations to have regard to Scrutiny’s recommendations which relate to relevant local improvement targets. As the new Decentralisation & Localism Bill is still passing through Parliament, the future of the LAA and associated targets remains unclear.

5.7 The present structure of Scrutiny at SBC is:



5.8 There is currently a **statutory requirement** for the provision of **Overview & Scrutiny Committee and a requirement to scrutinise Health matters.**

Health Scrutiny

- 5.9 Following the establishment of NHS Berkshire East (due to the reconfiguration of the local Primary Care Trusts) serving the boroughs of Bracknell Forest, Windsor & Maidenhead and Slough, a Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JEBHOS) was formed; JEBHOS includes representatives (including elected members) from all three local authority areas. JEBHOS scrutinises health provision across East Berkshire whereas health matters relating only to each local authority area remain the remit of the relevant scrutiny committee or panel operated by that authority (e.g. the Health Standing Panel at SBC). JEBHOS meets three times a year and, by rotation, every third year each partner authority undertakes clerking, general administrative support and provides meeting facilities. Whilst this is not exhaustive, there are cost implications and it is recommended that the JEBHOS be kept under review.
- 5.10 SBC is also a member of the South Central Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (SCHOSC) which covers a wide area from Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes to the Isle of Wight and includes the whole of the Thames Valley region. This is not a formally constituted committee but more of an informal network which now only meets as and when a relevant issue or consultation concerning the area arises. The network is likely to adjust and adapt in response to the proposals regarding GP commissioning and consortia and may well continue to meet our needs in terms of regional health scrutiny.
- 5.11 Under the new proposals for health reforms, local authorities will be required to create Health and Wellbeing Boards which will be responsible for setting the local direction of health services and as part of this they will absorb the powers currently given to Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The role of elected members, if any, on the Health and Wellbeing Boards is not clear at this point.

Support to Scrutiny

- 5.12 SBC's Scrutiny Officer attends Committee and Standing Panel meetings, internal SBC Scrutiny related meetings, SBC public Scrutiny Surgeries, general Elected Member training and forward planning/agenda setting meetings. The officer helps co-ordinate reports, attendance at meetings by outside parties and administrative functions in conjunction with Democratic Services. The Scrutiny officer also advises elected members and other Scrutiny members on good practice with regard to scrutiny.
- 5.13 Currently all OSC and SPs meetings are formally serviced by Democratic Services, producing comprehensive minutes providing an accurate record of debate and recommendations. Consideration of methods of working and responsibilities has been undertaken as part of the support savings exercise and it is proposed that Democratic Services Officers continue to service the OSC and Health SP and the Scrutiny Officer service the remaining two SPs. Notes of meetings would be confined to action points and recommendation. This would enable notes to be produced very quickly and will save on Democratic Officer support time. As a full note of the main actions and recommendations will be taken it is believed that this will not compromise the quality of the necessary record of the Panel meetings.

Combination of Panels

- 5.14 The existing Panel structure was introduced a number of years ago. The CL&E and N&R SPs have seen a blurring of subject matter with both SPs often considering similar if not the same material at their individual meetings. This has resulted in a

degree of duplication and in an attempt to reduce such duplication, bring consensus and enable the two SPs to work together better, a number of joint meetings have been held. This has worked well.

- 5.15 In 2010/2011, 35 Scrutiny meetings have been scheduled formally: OSC x 10, CL&E x 6, E&CS x 7, Health x 6 and N&R x 6. Additional meetings are held on an as-and-when-required basis.
- 5.16 The holding of combined meetings has reduced the number of individual meetings which, understandably and in turn, reduces the costs associated with Facilities (room hire, layout of the room, utilities, etc), the amount of time deployed by Democratic Services (preparation, sending out of agenda packs, clerking and the production of minutes, etc) and the amount of Scrutiny Officer time (meeting preparation, attendance at meetings, follow-ups, etc).
- 5.17 The Chair and Vice-Chair of OSC and the Chairs of each of the SPs receive Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) which are paid in addition to their Basic Allowances (BA). The Scrutiny SRAs in the current year are £6461, £2154 and £2769 respectively.
- 5.18 By combining the Community Leisure & Environment and Neighbourhood & Renewal panels, as a first step (subject to the necessary Council Constitution amendments), an immediate cost saving of £2769, without effecting service outcome, could be achieved.
- 5.19 The case has already been made for the rationalisation of the CL&E and N&R SPs into one. Subject to the NHS White Paper and whether the requirement to scrutinise health separately continues after 2013 (following the return of public health and health improvement to local authorities), a case might be made at that time for a second-stage rationalisation from the then three into two.

Agenda Setting and Role of Scrutiny

- 5.20 Many of the agendas for each of the SPs incorporate standard items already considered by OSC (such as Performance Reports) which involves duplication. In addition, many SP agendas include update reports on matters already considered at an earlier date or previous meeting by that SP. Whilst updates are welcome, it often transpires that a further lengthy debate takes place on the same subject matter. If SP agendas were slimmed down considerably (with more in-depth and thorough scrutiny being undertaken on specific subject matter as opposed to generally high-level scrutiny undertaken) better more effective scrutiny could be undertaken via shorter, tighter and more focussed meetings.
- 5.21 Other local authorities are equally having to make financial savings. Many are also streamlining Scrutiny. A concept being employed elsewhere is that “to note” or “for information” papers are not considered generally at Scrutiny meetings but are circulated separately for information. This reduces the length of each meeting and helps Scrutiny robustly focus on priorities and select subject matter.
- 5.22 The inclusion of time guides for each agenda item would assist in focussing Member time at meeting and Chair’s will be asked to consider time guides at Chair’s briefing meetings prior to agenda despatch.
- 5.23 It is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s responsibility to hold the executive account and the Committee needs to explore the most effective mechanism for achieving this.

6 Conclusion

The measures and proposals outlined in this paper should help to provide some small efficiencies in terms of costs but also effectiveness in terms of sharper and more focused scrutiny. The proposals should not diminish the role of scrutiny – instead it should allow better use of time and resources to support a vital function.

7 Background papers

None

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 27th January 2011

CONTACT OFFICERS: Rob Wood - Census Project Manager 87(5786)
Kevin Gordon - AD Transformational Change (87) 5213

(For all enquiries) (01753) 87 5786 rob.wood@slough.gov.uk

Census – A Progress Report**1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to update the committee on the current census project with particular reference to recent developments with the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and it's response to elected member concerns.

2 Recommendation(s)

- a) The committee is requested to examine the responses given by the ONS to concerns registered by elected members at previous meetings.
- b) to consider any further follow-up questions or actions with respect to the Census project.
- c) To note the current progress of the project to date
- c) To examine members' contribution to the Census project.

3 Community Strategy Priorities

As with all local authorities, Slough Borough Council relies on census population figures to get the government funding needed for public services. The amount of funding the borough receives is related to the diversity and number of people the census says live in our area. An effective census campaign therefore underpins and promotes each of the community strategy priorities with the potential to make a real difference to our residents and communities.

4 Other Implications**(a) Financial**

There are no financial implications of proposed action.

(b) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights or Legal implications.

5 Supporting Information

Background to the report: Issues from previous meetings, resolutions and recommendations

- a) *The Scrutiny Officer referred to the ONS and Census 2011 action point within the minutes. He presented to the meeting copies of correspondence between ONS and SBC which he believed showed an impasse was forming and he suggested a meeting be held with ONS to include two representatives from the Committee. It was RESOLVED that Cllrs Mann and Haines (representing the O&S Committee), the Leader, the Chief Executive and relevant officers meet with ONS. Cllrs O'Connor and Bains indicated they would be willing to join the meeting if one or either of the previously O&S Committee attendees was unable to attend. The Scrutiny Officer would make arrangements accordingly.*
- b) *The Area Manager focuses his effort and time on the Slough area, in particular due to the extraordinary circumstances of the resident and transient population of the area.*
- c) *That additional questionnaires are issued to, and followed up with HMOs subject to methodology to be discussed and agreed with officers of the council*
- d) *That the ONS makes it clear to Slough residents that any data provided by them to the Census 2011 is not supplied to any other agency, government or public body and is only released after 100 years and is, therefore effectively supplied to the ONS on a confidential basis*
- e) *That the ONS monitors responses during the return period and adjusts the workforce, collector activity and publicity awareness accordingly*

5.1 A meeting took place on the 16th December 2010 between the ONS, Glen Watson and Garnett Compton and Slough Borough Council, Ruth Bagley and Kevin Gordon. From that meeting the following assurances were given by the ONS.

- 5.1.1 Resources for SBC

The ONS has given assurances to provide additional support and priority given to engage with local community groups. As well as this consideration would be given to examine the arrangements and resourcing for the support of completion events. The ONS would also identify activities that Coordinators can support from 7th Feb onwards

- 5.1.2 Hard to Count Classification and follow up resources

The ONS will release the percentage of returned questionnaires every week from the 1st April until 13th May. From the 8th May Slough will be informed of its 'cold spot' out of five coordinator areas. The ONS will not share the return rates of the other four areas, even if they are as low as the cold spot.

- 5.1.3 Slough has been allocated 8,000 hours for follow up – a four fold increase from 2001. Should ONS have concerns about response rates in Slough as the field operation unfolds a number of options will be available including contracting

additional hours for field staff and moving field resources from higher response areas to lower ones.

- 5.1.4 Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and garden annexes.
- 10 Early Collectors will start on the 21st March (with remaining collectors beginning their work on the 6th April) and part of their role will be to make contact with the HMO addresses to determine the number of people and/or households at the address and then follow the relevant procedures. For large households (more than 6 people) they will issue continuation questionnaires; for addresses with more than one household they will issue a new household questionnaire and record the address on the address register.
- ONS are saying that for beds in sheds and HMOs the approach and guidance to early collectors will be to aim to get the number of people 'on the footprint' right, giving this more priority than getting the number of households at the address right if necessary. ONS have said that this should help the early collectors on the door step in overcoming barriers about the disclosure of illegal annexes.
- 5.1.5 Quality assurance and census coverage survey
- The ONS have told us that the Census Coverage Survey (CCS) will help the ONS to assess and adjust for those households and people who did not complete their census questionnaire. The ONS have told us that the CCS and the subsequent coverage adjustment process is crucial to ensuring that the census population estimate is a robust measure of Slough's population
- The sample for the CSS in Slough will be drawn from a sample of 5% of output areas – considerably more than the average of 3% of output areas for the whole of England and Wales.
- After the coverage assessment there will be an extensive quality assurance process to compare the emerging census population estimates with comparator sources to provide assurance that the estimates are plausible and robust. SBC are already providing the ONS with administrative data or research into Slough's population that will further inform this quality assurance process.

5.2 Census – Progress to date

- Alongside our press and media work an extensive marketing and publicity campaign is well underway and one of the main features is the loan of two outreach vehicles from RBFRS, one of which will tour around the Borough to schools, places of worship etc and the second forming part of a marketing exercise on the high street. In addition there will be information kiosks, banners, leaflets, advert panels on SBC vehicles, and giveaways such as pens for school children. The publicity campaign will commence from the 4th March 2011 until 5th April when questionnaires will start to arrive on door mats.
- Completion centres will form the backbone of the 2011 Census operation in Slough aimed at providing help and assistance to people with literacy needs, those with English as a second language and disabled people. We are planning for 100+ centres including all primary schools, places of worship, libraries, My Council, and local community and voluntary groups. The RBFRS outreach vehicle will also

operate as a 'mobile completion centre'. The completion centre operating period will be from 27th March (Census Day) until the 5th April

- Between the 6th April until 13th May the ONS teams of 5 Area Co-ordinators and 60+ collectors will follow at address that have not posted back or completed the census online. Throughout this SBC will receive updates from the ONS of the percentage of Slough's completion rates.

5.3 Members roles and responsibilities

- The support of councillors is vital to ensure a successful census and members can be involved in a number of ways through:
 - Promoting the census in your area by asking local groups if they have been asked to get involved with the census. If not, to get in touch with us as it's not too late.
 - Using any canvassing as an opportunity to mention the census and convey the key messages to your local residents
 - Informing the census team of any Sheds or HMOs – by emailing the Census Project Manager.

6 Conclusion

The intervention of Overview and Scrutiny Committee has made a marked difference in the way that the ONS now responds to Slough Council. The additional resources that have been provided by the ONS for Slough although not comprehensive are to be welcomed.

7 Background Papers

None

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
FORWARD AGENDA PLAN 2010-11

Meeting	Scrutiny Items	Other	Final Report Deadline (5 pm)
3 March, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Constable's visit • Performance & Financial Reporting 2010 RP/JE • Executive Forward Plan • Credit Union Update (PK) • Customer Services Update (RP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members attendance report • Forward Work Programme 	18 February, 2011
31 March, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance & Financial Reporting 2010 RP/JE • Executive Forward Plan • Annual Scrutiny Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members attendance report • Forward Work Programme 	18 March, 2011
Unprogrammed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-Implementation Review of Art @ the Centre Scheme (G Ralphs/R Kirkham) • Report on the impact of the budget on MyCouncil • Effect of Economic Downturn on the Economy of Slough-Update-June 2011 		

This page is intentionally left blank